



JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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NATURAL SCIENCE AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

"Natural Science and Christian Education" was the topic for discussion at the 32nd Annual Summer Institute sponsored by the Association of Christian Schools in Japan. Nearly 200 educators present at the institute represented 55 Christian schools in Japan.

The selection of the above topic reflected the growing demands for a greater emphasis on natural science in the Christian schools, most of which are known for their efforts in English and religion.

Preceding group discussions, lectures were given by Prof. Fujio Tomita of Kanto Gakuin University and Prof. Hajime Narumi of Doshisha University. Both speakers stressed the need for the institute to take up the problem of natural science not because of outward, social pressure, but rather, because any consideration of the present purpose of a Christian education should include the place of natural science.

The discussion groups, divided into primary, jr. high, sr. high A, st. high B, and college, deplored the low scholastic ability of students in the natural sciences, especially high school students contemplating a college education. The chief reasons given for this low ability were as follows: 1) The founders of the schools were foreigners or received their

education in foreign lands, and these teachers put emphasis on English making this the speciality of the schools. 2) The Bible, the contradictions between the teachings on the origin of life in Genesis and such teachings as found in natural sciences--especially the origin of life--as formulated in the evolutionary theory. 3) The great number of "sensitive" women students as compared to "reasoning" students. 4) The lack of desire to master their studies. 5) The shortage of natural science teachers.

The jr. and sr. high groups complained of the great number of hours of English and Religion instruction as compared to hours of instruction in the natural sciences.

A statement receiving much sympathy in one of the sr. high groups was that it was necessary of course to proclaim the gospel, but it was too bad that sometimes the chapel talks went overtime as much as thirty minutes, thus encroaching upon the time of studies. Included in this statement was the observation that the schools' Christianity was only a formality.

It was suggested by the chaplain of the institute that if the chapel services of a school were interfering with studies, it would be best to discontinue chapel. Also religious education is necessary for the perfection of character, but if, on the contrary, it is thought to be interfering with the educational program of the school, a new approach should be found.

Also, that the lack of contact between the natural science instructor and the chaplain or religion department head should be overcome by the natural science instructor being more "positive" in "filling in" the religion department instructor's scanty knowledge of science.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ROLE OF MISSIONARY

The Missionary Problem Committee, a sub-committee of the Council of Cooperation (COC)--cooperative agency of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan), the Association of Interboard-related Schools, the Christian Social Work League and the Inter-board Committee, has sent out about 1,000 questionnaires to "provide Basic material for serious and thoroughgoing reflection on the present role of Kyodan missionaries."

Two questionnaires, similar in content, were sent out. One, in Japanese, was sent to all 400 Japanese delegates to the Kyodan Genl. Assembly (to convene Oct. 23-26) and to the leaders of all related Christian schools and social work institutions. The other questionnaire, in English, was mailed to all missionaries related to the Kyodan.

The English questionnaire is divided into two sections, the descriptive and evaluation. The descriptive section, which is divided into four parts--church related, school related, social work related and family and home, provides space for description of the missionary's position and activities.

The evaluation section is divided into eight parts--the missionary role, growth factors, organizational relationships, family and the living situation, spiritual life, orientation, school related missionaries, and social work missionaries. An opportunity is given for the missionary to evaluate his or her place in the overall mission of the church in Japan, with much space give to the consideration of the financial role of the missionary. Relationships to colleagues, organizations, Japanese friends and English speaking people are also explored. The questions under the spiritual life part probe the growth or non-growth factors. The part for school related missionaries ask the missionary to evaluate the contribution of the school to the overall mission of the Church as well as to the educational life of Japan. The questions under the part for social work related missionaries investigated the place of the institution in the community and the Christian emphasis.

The Japanese language questionnaire was divided into four sections: personal relations with missionaries, activities of missionaries; how cooperation with missionaries should be, and the principles of the cooperation problem. Included were such questions as: Who is responsible in the area where the missionary work for specific cooperative activity? What is the theological meaning of sending of missionaries to Japan?

The questionnaires will serve as valuable information for the National Conference on Cooperative Mission Policy to be held at Amagisan-so on Oct. 2-4 and for the March Conference to be held next year with the arrival of IBC representatives.

NOTED INDIAN CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR DIES

Dr. Paul David Devanandan, noted Indian Christian scholar who was active in the world ecumenical movement, died recently while preparing to come to Japan for a scheduled year of lecturing at International Christian University.

According to a message received at ICU, Dr. Devanandan died suddenly on August 10 at his home in Bangalore, India. He was to have flown to Tokyo on August 20 with Mrs. Devanandan. ICU had invited him to serve as the Lilly Endowment Professor in Christian Ethics for 1962-63.

Dr. Devanandan was on the staff of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore. During an active career in which he traveled frequently to countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, he served as visiting professor in numerous institutions, including twice at the Union Theological Seminary, New York, and once at Cambridge University England.

He undertook several missions for the World Council of Churches and acted as consultant in each of the three assemblies conducted by the WCC.

Dr. Devanandan's academic field was the history of religion. He was an authority on Hinduism, which figured as a prominent subject in his writings.

At the time of his death Dr. Devanandan was 61.

Correction--The following statement on page 2 of the April 1, 1962 issue is inaccurate: "the United Church of the Philippines has about an equal number of believers as the United Church of Christ in Japan, but of the 12 officials in charge of business matters of the Philippine Church, 10 are missionaries (foreign)." We are grateful to General Secretary Enrique C. Sobrepesa of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines for a complete summary of the personnel at the national level, portions of which we quote below: ".... at the top level of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines there are four Bishops, a General Secretary, and a General Treasurer. Of these six top officials..... all are Filipinos." Christian work is promoted through four departments, Christian Education, Evangelism, Mission, and Public Welfare. "Three of the secretaries of these departments are Filipinos. Only one is a missionary (foreign). It happens that our Secretary of Christian Education, Dr. Albert Sanders, is an American missionary. Within the departments and general offices we have directors, assistants and consultants. There are at present 6 missionary, directors, 1 missionary assistant, and 3 missionary consultants. There are also, 8 Filipino directors and 1 Filipino assistant. All of the office secretaries, etc. are Filipinos....." General Secretary Sobrepesa notes also that "all missionaries (foreign) who are serving in whatever capacity within the United Church of Christ in the Philippines are appointed or elected to their tasks by the church. None serve by virtue of appointment by the supporting boards in America or the missionary group in the Philippines."

